

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 M-02 SP-03 MMS-04 PER-05 ABF-01

A-01 OPR-02 /049 W

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R 031610Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7459

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 2554

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, CS

SUBJECT: NEED FOR MISSION TRANSLATOR

1. CHARGE WAS INFORMED BY ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER LAST WEEKEND THAT MINISTRY WILL SHORTLY CIRCULATE NOTE REQUIRING ALL FOREIGN EMBASSIES TO ATTACH SPANISH TRANSLATIONS TO ALL NOTES OR CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSED TO MINISTRY WHICH ARE NOT ORIGINALLY IN SPANISH LANGUAGE.

2. THIS MISSION SENT 229 NUMBERED NOTES PLUS AN ESTIMATED 20 AIDES MEMOIRE LAST YEAR. IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR WE SENT 113 NOTES AND AN ESTIMATED 10 AIDES MEMOIRE.

3. THE NEW REQUIREMENT FOR TRANSLATIONS OF THESE COMMUNICATIONS IS BEYOND THE CAPACITY OF THIS MISSION AS PRESENTLY STAFFED. NOT ONLY IS THE VOLUME SIGNIFICANT, BUT THE PRECISE NATURE OF MANY OF THE REQUIRED TRANSLATIONS DEMANDS TRANSLATING EXPERTISE NOT FOUND IN OUR LOCAL STAFF. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE WITH RESPECT TO THE MANY LONG, DETAILED AND OFTEN TECHNICAL OR EVEN LEGAL MATERIALS RECEIVED FROM THE DEPARTMENT (USUALLY IN CIRCULARS) ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

4. THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS OCCUR TO THE EMBASSY:

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A) THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT PREPARE AND TRANSMIT

SIMULTANEOUSLY SPANISH TEXTS FOR DIRECT USE IN NOTES BY ALL EMBASSIES IN SPANISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES. THIS COURSE WOULD HAVE THE ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF OBTAINING THE NEED FOR MORE THAN 20 SEPARATE TRANSLATIONS AT RECIPIENT POSTS.

B) THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT CIRCULARIZE FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON ON SUCH MATTER--WHICH IT COULD DO IN ENGLISH--RATHER THAN IN THE FIELD. WE RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS COURSE MIGHT NOT PRODUCE SATISFACTORY RESULTS IN TERMS OF PROMPT ACTION.

C) AUTHORIZE ANOTHER LOCAL POSITION AT THIS MISSION FOR A HIGHLY QUALIFIED LOCAL TRANSLATOR. AT PRESENT WORK LEVELS, THIS MIGHT BE A PART-TIME EMPLOYEE, AND WE WOULD PROBABLY SEEK SOMEONE WITH A LEGAL BACKGROUND TO FILL IT. IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT, THIS MIGHT PROPERLY BE A SHARED POSITION, SINCE THE TOPICS COVERED IN FORMAL NOTES ENHANCE A WIDE RANGE OF U.S. AGENCY INTERESTS.

D) PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THIS EMBASSY TO ARRANGE FOR OUTSIDE TRANSLATING EXPERTISE ON A NON-PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACT BASIS. THIS WOULD OF COURSE BE A LESS DESIRABLE SOLUTION GIVEN OUR NEED FOR PRIVACY IN HANDLING THESE MATERIALS REGARDLESS OF CLASSIFICATION.

5. PROMPT DEPARTMENTAL ACTION IS REQUESTED.
LANE

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